



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Vineta. Song. Words from the Schleswig-Holstein Poetry. Composed by Henry Smart.

A CHARMINGLY fresh and melodious song, for a contralto voice. Mr. Smart has, more than any modern vocal writer, the faculty of throwing a grace around a simple theme by an accompaniment, which, whilst it preserves an independent character, never interferes with the flow of the melody. The chain of transient modulations, beginning at the bar marked "poco animato," we must especially point to, as being infinitely beyond anything we are accustomed to meet with in a song of such small pretension; and the return to the original placid subject is exceedingly beautiful. We heartily commend this composition to the notice of all who desire to sing music written by a musician. The poetry is founded upon a tradition that the ruins of Vineta (an ancient town on the Baltic, which was upheaved by an earthquake and swallowed by a flood) are visible on certain days, and the bells audible below the waves.

Exercises and Observations, intended to assist in the Cultivation of the Voice. By Rosario Aspa. 2nd Edition.

Nor the least merit of this book is the unpretending manner in which it is put forth. So many works on singing are heralded with the announcement that every preceding treatise on the subject is utterly wrong, that it is refreshing to find a teacher modestly publishing the result of his own experience, without attacking the experience of others. And it is precisely because he professes so little, that he has done so much. There is nothing startlingly novel either in the observations or the exercises in this book; but all the remarks are sound and judicious; and the examples will be found highly useful to students. The exercises on the shake are written precisely as they always ought to be—ending on the note *above* that on which the shake is made: and we especially admire the manner in which the difficulties previously illustrated and commented upon, are embodied in a melody with variations. We can conscientiously say that this little work, professedly "intended to assist in the cultivation of the voice," will fully accomplish its object. No singer, however, can be formed by a book; and we perfectly agree with our author's observation, that a good master "must be unceasingly attentive, anxious to bring out his pupils' capabilities to the full; quick to check bad habits, and careful to encourage good ones."

LAMBORN COCK, ADDISON AND CO.

The Woman of Samaria. A Sacred Cantata. Composed by William Sterndale Bennett, Mus. Prof. Cantab.

THE success of a new work at the Birmingham Musical Festival is so likely to be materially aided, not only by the excellent manner in which it is invariably submitted to the public, but by the excitement and enthusiasm inseparable from these brilliant meetings, that we are always loth to do more than record our impression of the composition at the time, reserving any more detailed notice for the opportunity afforded us on its publication, of carefully examining and lingering over those many effects which, however much they may have delighted us on a first hearing, must pass away too rapidly to allow of their beauties being fully revealed. Professor Bennett has been in no hurry to force his Cantata into print before he has had time to think on the possibility of improving it; and the result is that it now comes before us as perfect a work as its composer can make it. This is as it should be. A real artist knows that his first thoughts may not always be his best; and when we remember that Mendelssohn, after the production of *Elijah* at the Birmingham Festival, re-wrote a great part of it, and materially altered the form of several of the pieces, we may reasonably accept such an example in proof of the danger of pressing forward the publication of a work before it has been heard, even by the composer himself. As the Cantata now stands, it contains twenty-two pieces. The pianoforte adaptation can of course only give a faint idea

of the rich instrumentation of the very beautiful Introduction in A minor; but it will effectually revive the recollection of the orchestral effect to all who have heard the work in the concert room. The chorale, syncopated so as to appear in even time against the accompaniment in triple time, is exceedingly ingenious; and the instrumental conclusion (returning to the original minor key, after the chorale in the relative major) is most happily conceived. The first chorus, "Blessed be the Lord God," is based on the highest models of sacred choral writing. The subject, commenced by the sopranos, in A major, is afterwards repeated in full vocal harmony; and a new theme, given out by basses and altos in octaves, introduced by a wonderfully fresh modulation into C major, is followed by a return to the original subject, after some beautiful unaccompanied choral phrases on the word "Blessed." The whole of this chorus is thoroughly religious in feeling; and the counterpoint throughout shows that the composer is profoundly impressed with the solid and strict style of the great Church writers. After a short chorus, "For with Thee is the well of life," beautifully descriptive of the words, occurs the soprano solo, "Art Thou greater than our father Jacob?" a well-written air, but scarcely so melodious and effective as most of the solos in the work. The next point of interest is the chorus, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water," which has been composed since the production of the Cantata at the Birmingham Festival. This is, unquestionably, one of the best choruses; and certainly is destined to become the most popular, not only from the effective manner in which the vocal and instrumental parts are combined; but from the bold and joyous subject with which it commences, and which seems to spring spontaneously from the hopeful words to which it is wedded. An extremely beautiful point occurs after a bar of silence, where the alto gives out a placid theme in E minor, ending upon the dominant, which is afterwards repeated by the other voices; and the return of the bright and melodious original subject is as fresh as it is unexpected and beautiful. The contralto air, "O Lord, thou hast searched me out," has already obtained a popularity which renders any notice on our part superfluous; but we may say that Madame Sainton-Dolby, by her exquisite delivery of this solo, has proved that the true religious fervour which has inspired the composer in his setting of the words, will be most faithfully reflected to the listener by an equally pure and unadorned utterance of the notes as they are written. The chorus, "Therefore, they shall come and sing," is a remarkable instance of the possibility of uniting the highest scholarly knowledge with the power of delighting and exciting a mixed audience; for, although a masterly specimen of contrapuntal skill, it has on every representation of the work produced a marked effect upon the listeners; and at Birmingham, by desire of the President, it was encoired. Written in six parts, it contains some fine antiphonal points; and the union of voices on the *forte* passage, "For wheat and for wine," is extremely striking. Even with the pianoforte accompaniment, the instrumental features of this chorus are well preserved; but we have a distinct recollection of some beautiful effects in the orchestra throughout this movement, the *pizzicato* of the strings, and the holding notes of the wind instruments being amongst the most noticeable. The unaccompanied quartet, "God is a spirit," is another addition to the work since its first performance; and although only lately composed, has continually appeared in the programmes of concerts devoted to sacred music. In this quartet, the simple eloquence of the words is heightened by the music with a truth only to be imparted by a composer, who works with that loving appreciation of his subject, without which, it is hopeless to attempt the illustration of a sacred text. After a short chorus, "Who is the image of the invisible God,"—which is accompanied by the organ only, and written in a style befitting the solemn nature of the subject—the chorus, "Come, O Israel," occurs in the key of E flat minor—although only three flats are placed at the signature. The